



9500 W. Bryn Mawr Ave.
Suite 500
Rosemont, IL 60018

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
BOLINGBROOK, IL
PERMIT NO. 181

BLHFFALL10

This information is background only and is not a substitute for your doctor/healthcare providers’ advice.
© 2010 Alere. All rights reserved. Alere is a trademark of the Alere group of companies.

Recipe: Salmon Fillets with Pineapple Salsa

Looking for the perfect light and tasty lunch or dinner? Try this recipe from the American Diabetes Association (ADA) for yummy salmon fillets with sweet pineapple salsa. For other delish dishes from ADA, check out www.diabetes.org.

Serves 4

Ingredients

Four 4-oz	salmon fillets, rinsed and patted dry
1/2 tsp	dried thyme leaves
1 15.25-oz	can pineapple tidbits, packed in juice, drained
1/2 cup	finely chopped red bell pepper
1/4 cup	finely chopped red onion
1 tsp	grated ginger
1/8 tsp	dried red pepper flakes (optional)

Preparation

- Line a baking sheet with foil and coat it with cooking spray.
- Place the salmon, skin side down, on the baking sheet.

- Sprinkle fish with thyme and season lightly with salt and pepper.

- Broil 10 minutes or until fish flakes.
- While broiling, combine all salsa ingredients in a small bowl and set aside. Serve the salmon with the salsa alongside.

Nutrition Information:

Calories: 255; Calories from Fat: 90
Total Fat: 10.0 g
Saturated Fat: 1.8 g
Cholesterol: 80 mg
Sodium: 60 g
Total Carbohydrate: 15 g
Dietary Fiber: 2 g
Sugars: 12 g
Protein: 26 g



SMART LIVING with Heart Failure

Fall 2010



IN THIS ISSUE:

- Should You Get the Flu Shot?
- Can Anger Hurt Your Heart?
- Back To Basics: Heart Health
- Cinnamon: Tasty *and* Healthy
- Can Hair Reveal Heart Risks?
- Recipe: Salmon Fillets with Pineapple

Should You Get the Flu Shot?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that nearly everyone over six months of age get the flu vaccine. Officials say it’s especially important for healthcare workers and high-risk populations to get vaccinated, including pregnant women, young children, people 65 and older, and people with chronic conditions like asthma, diabetes and heart and lung disease.

Infants under six months old are at high risk for flu complications. But they’re too young to get the vaccine. So anyone who takes care of them should get vaccinated to avoid infecting them.

The flu vaccine is given as a shot or a nose spray. The injection is approved for use in people over six months old. It contains inactivated or killed viruses. It cannot cause the flu. The nasal spray is approved for use in healthy people, 2 to 49, who aren’t pregnant. It’s made with live, weakened viruses that don’t cause the flu.

Side effects. Some people who get the shot may develop a low-grade fever and/or redness, soreness and swelling at the injection site. Individuals who get the nasal spray may

develop mild symptoms, including a runny nose, headache, fever, sore throat or cough. Severe reactions are rare. But call your doctor if you develop a high fever, difficulty breathing or other serious symptoms.

Some people should not get the vaccine. Among them: infants under six months old, individuals with a severe allergy to chicken eggs (the flu vaccine is grown in eggs), and those who previously had a bad reaction.

Dose. Adults and most children need one dose of the flu vaccine each year. Some children younger than 9 may need two doses. A high-dose flu shot is available for people 65 and older.

The new vaccine protects against three viruses that scientists believe will be most common and are most likely to sicken people this flu season: an H3N2 virus, an influenza B virus and the H1N1 (a.k.a. “swine flu”) virus that wreaked havoc last year.

To cut your risk of getting or spreading the flu, the CDC also recommends that you wash your hands a lot and sneeze and cough into a tissue or, at least, into your arm (*not your hand*).

Can Anger Hurt Your Heart?

Talk about karma. Angry? Mean? Aggressive? You might want to chill. A new study shows that hostile people may have an increased risk of heart attack and stroke.

According to the study, published in the journal *Hypertension*, nasty people tend to have greater thickening of their neck (carotid) arteries than easygoing folks. Thick neck artery walls are a risk factor for heart attacks and strokes.

Scientists from the National Institute on Aging (NIA) studied 5,614 residents on the Italian island Sardinia. They ranged in age from 14 to 94. Participants filled out standard personality questionnaires.

The results: The least agreeable people were about 40 percent more likely than pleasant people to have thickening in the lining of their neck arteries. This held even after researchers adjusted for smoking and other risk factors.

Three years later, the meanest of the bunch continued to have thickening of their artery walls.

Researchers said that agreeable people tend to be trusting, straightforward and show concern for others. Hostile people, on the other hand, tend to be distrustful, self-centered, arrogant and quick to express anger, according to the study.

Personality appeared to play a greater role in women. The researchers report that men in general had more thickening of their artery walls. But they said that nasty women tended to catch up and show similar risk.

According to the American Heart Association, there are about 1.2 million heart attacks and 800,000 strokes in the U.S. every year. Cardiovascular disease accounts for about one-third of all deaths in the U.S. Researchers' advice: Learn how to control anger and express it in more socially acceptable ways. Translation: *Be nice!*



Back to Basics: Ways to Boost Your Heart Health

The American Heart Association (AHA) has a new goal: to improve Americans' health and lower U.S. deaths from heart disease and stroke 20 percent by the year 2020. Here are some ways you can help meet that goal:

■ **Eat well.** Eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, fish, and lean meats (like skinless poultry). Choose high-fiber whole grains.

■ **Monitor cholesterol and blood pressure.** Eat less saturated fat, trans fats and foods (like red meat and egg yolks) that contain dietary cholesterol. Limit salt and alcohol intake according to your doctor's recommendations.

■ **Lose weight if necessary.** Carrying around a few – or *many* – extra pounds? Want to slim down? May be time to cut calories. The bottom line: You gain weight if you consume *more* calories than your body uses. But you lose weight if you eat *fewer* calories than your body uses. Want to lose as much as a pound a week? Cut out about 500 calories a day.

■ **Get moving.** Exercise helps keep your weight, cholesterol and blood pressure in check. It can also enhance your energy and mood.

■ **Quit smoking.** Smoking significantly raises your risk for many illnesses from heart disease to cancer. So stop smoking! Need help kicking the habit? Check out smoking cessation programs and ask your doctor about meds that can help you quit.

■ **Be a Partner in Your Care.** Work with your doctor to treat any health problems that arise. Take medicine only as directed and tell your doctor if it makes you sick or isn't working. He or she can adjust the dose or switch you to another more effective drug.



Cinnamon: Tasty *and* Healthy

Cinnamon may do more than just spice up your French toast and afternoon cappuccino. Seems it also – hold onto your shakers – may help reduce risk factors linked to heart disease and diabetes.

During a small U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) study, 22 obese volunteers with pre-diabetes (high blood sugar levels) were split into two groups. They were given either a placebo or 250 milligrams of dried water-soluble cinnamon extract twice daily.

Researchers measured the level of glucose (sugar) and antioxidants in participants' blood at the start of the study. They measured it again



after six and 12 weeks. Antioxidants are nutrients that enhance the body's infection-fighting ability. They also help keep substances called free radicals (cigarette smoke, sun, pollution) from hurting us. Free radicals have been linked to premature aging and chronic conditions, including diabetes, heart disease and cancer.

The study results, published in the *Journal of the American College of Nutrition*: Subjects who took the cinnamon extract had 13 to 23 percent less sugar and higher levels of antioxidants in their blood. *Sweet!*

Can Hair Reveal Heart Risks?

Stress is a part of everyday life. Think bills, traffic, juggling kids and work.... Like most things, a little bit won't hurt you. And, in some cases, it's even helpful. Our body's "fight and flight" response is designed to protect us when we're in danger. And that's just what sudden spikes of cortisol do in our bodies.

But it's not healthy if cortisol levels are always high. Cortisol is a so-called stress hormone. Our bodies produce more of it when we're worried. That means if we're stressed a lot, our cortisol levels are high a lot.

Over the long term, elevated cortisol levels can hike blood pressure, blood sugar, body fat and blood clotting. These are risk factors for heart attacks and other medical problems. Previous studies have linked chronic stress to an increased risk for cardiovascular and other diseases. But there was no scientific way to measure stress over time.

Scientists traditionally have measured stress by the amount of cortisol in blood, urine or saliva samples. But that only shows levels at the time of the tests. Now researchers have developed a

way to gauge long-term stress by measuring cortisol in the hair. This works because cortisol builds up in the hair shaft, according to the study that appeared online in the journal *Stress*.

For the study, Canadian scientists measured cortisol levels in 3-centimeter-long hair strands from 56 men in the hospital. Some of the patients had suffered heart attacks; others were hospitalized for different reasons.

The findings: hair from the heart attack patients contained higher levels of cortisol. The researchers estimate that hair grows about a centimeter (just under half an inch) a month. So they could measure patients' cortisol or stress levels over about three months.

The researchers considered many heart attack risk factors. But they found that cortisol in the hair was the strongest heart attack predictor, according to the study.

The message? Relax. *Your health could depend on it!*

